

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

ACDA-10 SAJ-01 /076 R

DRAFTED BY EA/ANP:MAGMICHAUD:MHS

APPROVED BY EA/ANP:LJMOSER

----- 072191

P 090037Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY

CINCPAC PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 108278

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AS, US, PFOR

SUBJECT: WHITLAM PRESS CLUB SPEECH

1. PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM ADDRESSED NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCH ON MAY 8. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS FROM TEXT SUPPLIED BY AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY:

BEGIN QUOTE:

WE SHOULD HAVE NO TRUCK WITH ANY NEW VARIATION OF THE "STAB IN THE BACK" THEORY--THAT THE WAR IN VIET-NAM WAS LOST NOT IN SAIGON BUT HERE IN WASHINGTON. THE TRUTH IS THAT THE UNITED STATES DID NOT "LOSE" VIET-NAM, ANYMORE THAN SHE "LOST" CHINA. VIET-NAM WAS NOT AMERICA'S TO LOSE. WHAT WAS DEFEATED WAS NOT THE UNITED STATES AND HER ALLIES BUT A POLICY OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION WHICH WAS BOUND TO FAIL. THERE WAS NO TIME IN THE PAST THIRTY YEARS WHEN SUCH A POLICY COULD HAVE SUCCEEDED. THE TRAGEDY FOR US ALL,
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BUT ABOVE ALL FOR THE PEOPLE OF INDOCHINA, IS THAT A POLICY

SO MANIFESTLY DOOMED FROM THE BEGINNING SHOULD HAVE BEEN CARRIED THROUGH FOR SO LONG.

IN THE SPECIFIC MATTER OF VIET-NAM, I AM NOT GOING TO BE PANICKED BY AN OUTCOME ACHIEVED MILITARILY IN 1975 WHICH

MIGHT HAVE COME ABOUT POLITICALLY IN 1954. I AM INTENT UPON REACHING A MODUS VIVENDI--A MEANINGFUL, CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP--WITH VIET-NAM IN 1975, AS WE WOULD ASSUREDLY HAVE HAD TO DO SOME TIME BETWEEN 1954 AND 1975, AND AS WITH SUCH NEEDLESS AND DAMAGING DELAY WE HAVE DONE WITH CHINA.

...WITH THE WAR IN VIET-NAM OVER, MANY NATIONS--AND A AUSTRALIA IS ONE, -- WILL HAVE EVEN GREATER CONFIDENCE IN AMERICA AS AN ALLY, FOR WE KNOW THAT AMERICAN RESOLVE, AMERICAN CAPACITY, AMERICAN RESOURCES WILL NO LONGER BE WEAKENED OR DISSIPATED IN A FRUITLESS CAUSE.

...THE GREAT AIMS OF AMERICAN POLICY CAN NOW CONTINUE UNDIMINISHED AND UNDETERRED, FREE OF THE IMPEDIMENTS AND DISTRACTIONS AND DISTORTIONS OF INDOCHINA. THE GREAT THRUST OF THAT POLICY RESTS UPON THE DETENTE WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND WITH ASSOCIATING CHINA IN A WIDER DETENTE. NOTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED IN INDOCHINA WOULD WARRANT THE UNITED STATES BEING DEFLECTED FROM THAT GREAT GOAL.

...I DO NOT ASSERT THAT DETENTE AS IT NOW EXISTS IS COMPLETE. BUT I DO ASSERT THAT IT MUST BE MADE COMPLETE IF ANY OF US ARE TO SURVIVE. WE CAN BEGIN BY ENSURING THAT REGIONS OF THE WORLD STILL LARGELY UNTOUCHED BY GREAT POWER RIVALRY CONTINUE TO REMAIN FREE OF IT. IN THAT CONNECTION, AUSTRALIA HAS LENT HER VOICE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF A ZONE OF PEACE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. ALL OF US WHO SUPPORT SUCH PROPOSALS, ALL OF US WHO SUPPORT DETENTE, KNOW THAT THE DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF ACHIEVING DETENTE ARE DAUNTING INDEED.. BUT CERTAINLY, UPON OUR SUCCESS OR FAILURE TURNS THE FUTURE OF MANKIND. AND IT IS BECAUSE OF THIS THAT THE UNITED STATES REMAINS THE TRUE LEADER OF THE WORLD AND, AS MUCH AS SHE USED TO BE, "THE UNCLASSIFIED

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LAST, BEST HOPE OF THE WORLD". FOR IT IS TO THE UNITED STATES THAT THE WEST CHIEFLY LOOKS FOR MEANINGFUL LEADERSHIP IN THAT DIRECTION. IF DETENTE IS TO SUCCEED, IT WILL CONTINUE TO REQUIRE AMERICAN INITIATIVES, AMERICAN COURAGE, AMERICAN LEADERSHIP.

...WITH THOSE PROFOUND TRAUMAS BEHIND YOU, WITH THEIR BITTERNESS AND MISERY BEING PURGED AWAY, WHAT BETTER TIME

TO PROFIT BY EXPERIENCE AND BUILD ON THE TRUE STRENGTHS OF
AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND AMERICAN IDEALISM? HERE IS AN
OPPORTUNITY--NOT JUST FOR AMERICA BUT FOR ALL OF US--
TO END OUR LONG PREOCCUPATION WITH MILITARY ALIGNMENTS
IN ASIA, OUR IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATIONS, OUR COLD WAR
HANGUPS, AND OPEN A NEW CHAPTER IN WESTERN COOPERATION.

LET THE DEEPER ISSUES OF POVERTY, OVERPOPULATION AND MAL-
DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORLD'S WEALTH ASSUME THEIR PROPER
IMPORTANCE IN OUR HEARTS AND MINDS. THESE ARE THE REAL
PROBLEMS OF ASIA. THESE ARE THE REAL PROBLEMS OF THE
WORLD. THESE, I TRUST, WILL BE THE REAL CONCERNS
OF THE UNITED STATES. WITH YOUR GREAT TRADITION OF MORAL
LEADERSHIP, YOUR UNEXAMPLED GENEROSITY, YOUR VISION, YOUR
ENERGY, YOUR SHEER ZEST FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT, YOU WILL FIND
NEW INSPIRATION IN THIS TASK--A TASK IN WHICH
AUSTRALIA WILL BE A READY AND A WILLING PARTNER. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DETENTE, SPEECHES, MINISTERIAL VISITS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE108278
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MAGMICAUD:MHS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750162-0729
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750565/aaaachjv.tel
Line Count: 132
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 SEP 2003 by buchantr>; APPROVED <16 JAN 2004 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WHITLAM PRESS CLUB SPEECH
TAGS: PFOR, AS, US, XC, CH, (WHITLAM, GOUGH)
To: CANBERRA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006